

# PIONEER

A HOME IN THE VALLEY



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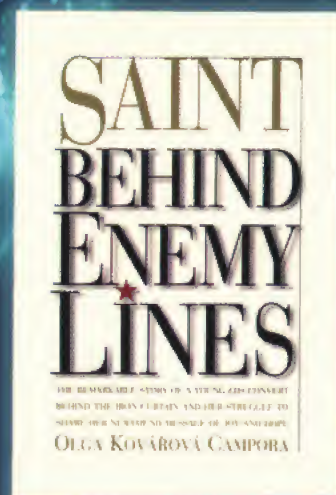
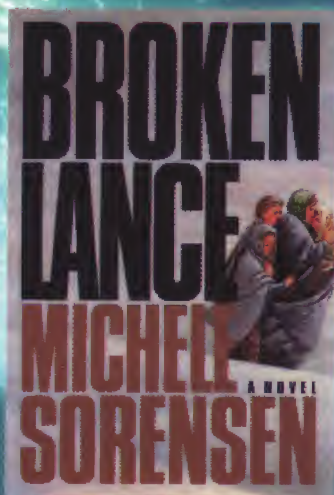
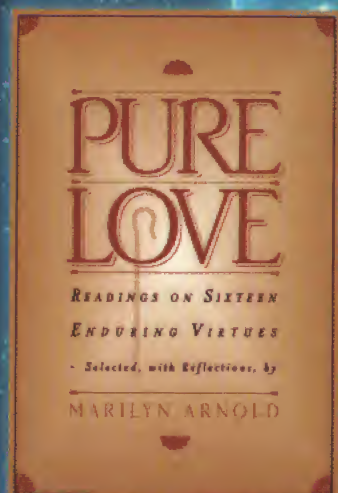
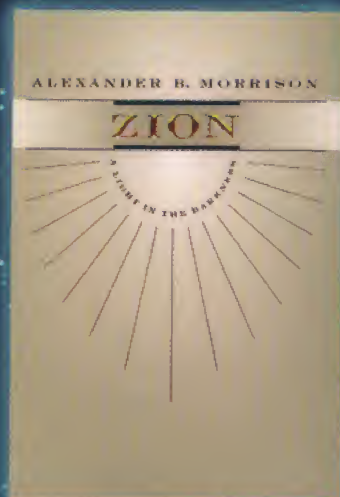
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# A Home in the Valley: The First Three Months in Utah

Summer 1997

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GREAT BASIN NORTH AMERICA

NICHOLAS & MORGAN DR

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A Publication of  
the National Society of the  
Sons of Utah Pioneers

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*The Furrow*  
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*A Publication of the  
National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers*

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The National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers honors early and modern-day pioneers, both young and older, for their faith in God, devotion to family, loyalty to church and country, hard work, service to others, courage in adversity, personal integrity and unyielding determination. *Pioneer* magazine supports the mission of the Society.

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 sesquicentennial  
 1997



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## Building a Home in the Valley



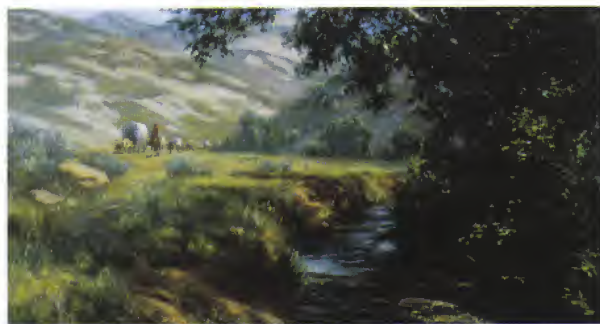
by

President Richard S. Frary

IT IS DIFFICULT FOR US TO KNOW of the discomfort and stress experienced by the Utah pioneers when they arrived in the Great Salt Lake Valley in July, 1847. They had few provisions left to eat. Their wardrobes consisted of the clothing on their backs. Their shelter was whatever they could rig up from wagon-top canvas or in dugouts. And their hopes for survival were pinned on the cultivation of crops even though they knew that the growing season was already half over.

The future must have appeared bleak, and yet their spirit, their faith, their hardiness and their ability to adapt to the circumstances that they found made them true pioneers. These traits are something that our generation should strive to emulate.

Wilford Woodruff records in his journal on July 24, 1847: "After gazing a while upon the scenery we traveled across the table land into the valley four miles, to the encampment of our brethren who had arrived two days before us. They had pitched their encampment upon the bank of two small streams of pure water and had commenced plowing and had broke about five acres of ground and commenced planting potatoes. As soon as we were located in the encampment, before I took my dinner, having one-half bushels of potatoes I repaired to the plowed field and planted my potatoes, hoping with the blessings of God at least to save the seeds for another year. The brethren had dammed up one of the creeks and dug a trench, and by night nearly the whole ground was irrigated with water."



"Pioneers Entering Salt Lake Valley" by Valoy Eaton

This was an anxious time for the new colonists in the Salt Lake Valley. In a letter to LDS Church members in Great Britain, John Taylor reported that they had constructed 3,638 rods, or nearly 12 miles of fence. This made an enclosure of more than 5,000 acres. Within this enclosure, about 2,000 acres of fall wheat had been sown. With a mild winter, the plows kept running through part of every month, preparing an additional 3-4,000 acres of corn and other crops. But until the fall harvest there was still the fear that the crops would fail, just as so many of the mountaineers they had met en route to the West had predicted. As a result, the community was placed on rations to ensure that the destitute might be supplied with food.

For some, their stay in the valley would be for a short duration. Many were subsequently directed by Brigham Young to continue on to other parts of the Utah Territory to settle and establish new communities. But for most in the valley, their first challenge was to survive until homes could be built and crops could be planted and harvested.

I doubt that Booker T. Washington had the Utah pioneers in mind when he uttered the following statement; however, it seems appropriate as applied to them in their circumstance: "I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one had reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome."

By any measure, the Utah pioneers were a success. ▼



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**Michael McLean** tours with Daniel February 28 - March 10, 1998. Michael has created many musical and dramatic programs including *Celebrating the Light*, *The Forgotten Carols* and *The Garden*, which he completed with Bryce Neubert shortly after their first visit to the Holy Land with Daniel in 1995. Michael has won numerous music, film and advertising awards. This will be a special event for Michael, as he and his wife will be picking up their daughter from her mission and then touring the Holy Land together.

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**P**RESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST, second counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, dedicated a monument to the last surviving Utah pioneer, Hilda Anderson Erickson, during ceremonies in Grantsville, Utah, in June.

"The statue built in her honor shows Hilda seated sidesaddle on one of her favorite horses, just as she would have looked as she rode on her many errands of mercy," President Faust said moments before he offered a dedicatory prayer for the impressive 12-foot statue designed by Peter Fillerup of Heber City. "And yet she still found time to take care of her husband and two children, and to serve for 25 years as Relief Society president."

President Faust told how Erickson and her two brothers immigrated from Sweden to the United States, arriving in the Salt Lake Valley in 1866. They lived in Mount Pleasant, Sanpete County, before moving to Grantsville, where their parents and another brother joined them. During her life, Erickson was a licensed obstetrician, general practitioner, dentist, veterinarian, tailor, teacher and the owner of two general stores. She died in 1968, at age 108.

During the services, which were attended by 1,200 people, including at least 250 of Erickson's descendants, President Faust commended the Settlement Canyon Chapter of the Sons of Utah Pioneers "for their foresight in sponsoring this fitting monument to memorialize this remarkable woman." Donald J. Rosenberg and Willard G. Atkin, who co-chaired the project, were specifically honored for their efforts. Former SUP National

President J. Elliot Cameron, chairman of the Utah Pioneer Sesquicentennial Coordinating Council, said that pioneers such as Erickson, "who came to the valleys of Utah to subdue the land and colonize the communities, need to be remembered and praised."

## Do You Have Time

FOR ONE MORE SESQUICENTENNIAL observance? A new brochure, "The Mormon Pioneer Trail: Then & Now," tells the story of Brigham Young's original pioneer company and their first few days in the Salt Lake Valley. It is designed to give people the opportunity to use contemporary landmarks to identify key sites in the early history of Utah's pioneers.

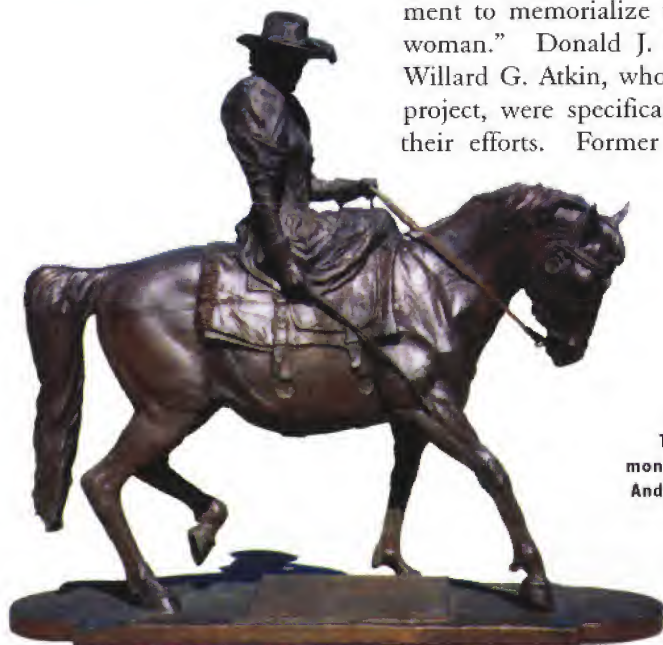
"Many people assume that the Mormon Pioneer Trail ends at the mouth of Emigration Canyon," said Rhonda Greenwood, coordinator of the Utah Pioneer Sesquicentennial Celebration Coordinating Council. "But historians have told us where the advance party of the Mormon pioneers traveled and camped from July 21-23, 1847, and now we're giving the public the opportunity to walk in their footsteps."

The brochure is based on research by W. Randall Dixon, a senior archivist for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and a frequent contributor to *Pioneer* (his story on "The Last Campsite" appears on page 10 of this issue). Journal accounts of pioneers such as Thomas Bullock, William Clayton and Erastus Snow lend personal insights into the different points of the trail. The brochure also maps the locations of the pioneers' first few days in the Salt Lake Valley, as well as post-pioneer era historic sites along the trail.

"The Mormon Pioneer Trail: Then & Now" is available at no charge at the ZCMI Center mall information booth, the Utah State Historical Society, the Utah Travel Council, This is the Place State Park, the Salt Lake County Convention & Visitor's Bureau Visitor Information Center and the DUP's Pioneer Museum.

For more information, please call 533-3513.

## President Faust Dedicates Monument to 'Last Pioneer'



Twelve-foot tall  
monument of Hilda  
Anderson Erickson



## Several Interesting New Resources

HAVE BEEN ADDED to the historical library at the SUP National Office (3301 E. 2920 South in Salt Lake City), including:

**Alphabetical List of Mormon Passengers on Emigrant Vessels: 1849-1869:** These two volumes list alphabetically the names of the passengers who crossed the ocean in order to come to Utah. Included are the names of ships, dates and in some cases, ages of passengers.

**Utah Place Names:** This book lists the name of cities and towns in Utah, when they existed and where they were located. It is an excellent source for locating old town in Utah.

**Utah Time Line** by Harold Schindler: This has been taken from the *Salt Lake Tribune* Internet web site and put into book form for easier reference.

**Daily Chronicle of Original and Modern Treks:** Another Internet offering that has been put into book form for easy reference, this gives a day-by-day account of various pioneer treks.

## Oops!

Several historical inaccuracies have crept into the pages of recent issues of *Pioneer*. In the Spring 1997 issue, Eli Harvey Peirce, a member of Brigham Young's vanguard pioneer company, was incorrectly identified in a photo feature honoring the 1847 pioneers. The photo that was used was actually of Eli Harvey Peirce Jr. A photograph of the elder Peirce is printed above right. And in the Winter 1997 issue, Paul W. Hodson's moving *Deseret Views* story, "Payback Time," a little editorial idiocy (I wish I could come up with another explanation) resulted in an unfortunate transposition of names. The 9-year-old boy who was killed at Haun's Mill was actually Sardius Smith, and the 6-year-old boy who was badly wounded during the attack was Alma Smith—not the other way around.

*Pioneer* sincerely regrets the errors—and thanks the Peirce and Smith descendants who brought them to our attention.



Eli Harvey Peirce, a member of Brigham Young's vanguard pioneer company, with his second wife Emma Marie Zundel, 1857

## In the Front Foyer

OF THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS building of the Sons of Utah Pioneers, there are some large plaques with the names of pioneers who came to the Salt Lake Valley before the railroad in 1869. The names are engraved on large metal plaques, are easy to read and are indestructible.

Of the 70,000-plus pioneers who came West to the Salt Lake Valley, only about 7,000 names have been memorialized on these plaques. And Florence Youngberg, coordinator of the SUP's name memorialization effort, thinks that is unfortunate.

"As we celebrate this Sesquicentennial year, now is an appropriate time to see that all of those who made the trek are honored with their names on the wall," Youngberg said. She encourages families to get together to cover the \$100 costs of name memorialization. "One hundred dollars isn't much when extended family members help," she said.

"Remember, the women who came worked hard to help in this pioneering effort, so they should be memorialized, too," Youngberg said. "Children can also be memorialized."

Youngberg also asked that those who memorialize their pioneer ancestors also share copies of personal or family histories "so others can learn of the life of these people to whom we owe so much."

*Youngberg can be contacted through the SUP's National Headquarters, 3301 E. 2920 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84109; call (801) 484-4441.*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPT. 18

BROWN BAG LECTURE SERIES:

"Writing Ethnic History:  
Memories of My Life"

by Helen Zeese Papanikolas  
noon at the  
White Chapel across from the  
Utah State Capitol

SEPT. 19-21

Governor's Conference  
on History & Heritage  
*This is the Place State Park*

OCT. 3

"History Now Playing"  
David Eccles Conference Center  
Ogden, Utah

OCT. 5

"Worldwide Pioneers" broadcast  
KSL-TV  
between LDS General Conference sessions

OCT. 16

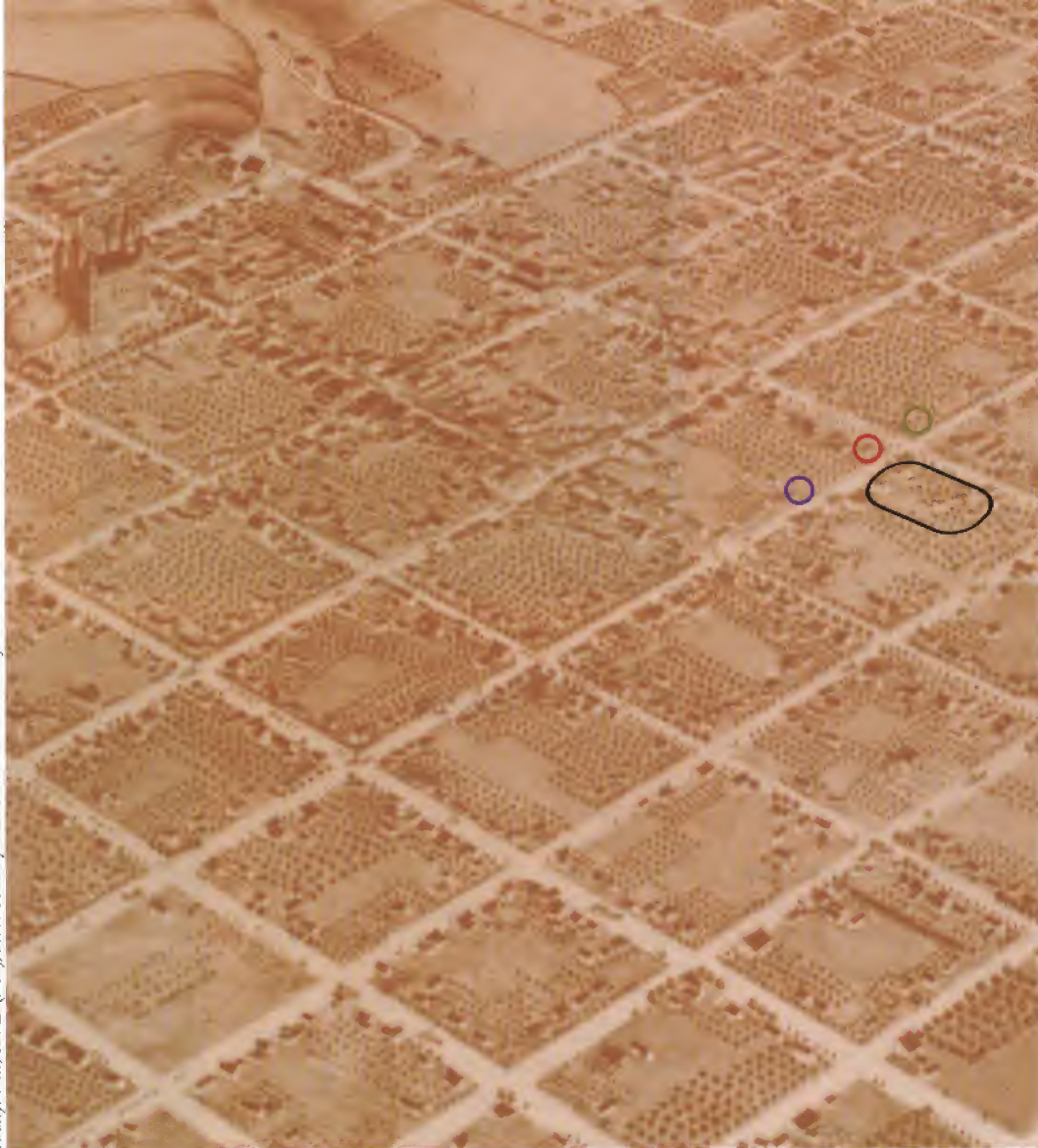
"Maude Adams: Actress"  
by Rachelle Castor  
noon at the  
White Chapel across from the  
Utah State Capitol



UTAH STATE CAPITOL



*Birds-eye View, Salt Lake City, 1870. Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.*



Future Site Methodist Church

Daniel Spencer Residence

Site of First Plowing

Site of First Encampment



*Courtesy LDS Church Archives.*



BY  
W. RANDALL  
DIXON

At noon on 23 July 1853, a few members of the 1847 Pioneer Company gathered in the Fourteenth Ward schoolhouse in Great Salt Lake City. After spending the afternoon recounting the events of that July day six years earlier, they joined with Captain Dominico Ballo's band and marched in procession to the sites of the first encampment, the first "ground breaking" or plowing and the first irrigation ditch before returning to the schoolhouse for dancing.<sup>1</sup> ¶ The sites of the founding events of 1847 were important to the pioneers. Over time, however, the location of one of the sites—the pioneer campground of 23 July 1847, which marked the end of the Mormon Trial—became the subject of controversy. As early as 1890, while many original pioneers were still alive, the *Salt Lake Herald* noted, "It has been a source of conjecture and discussion as to what precise spot in the present city site the pioneers made their first stopping place."<sup>2</sup> ¶ Perhaps this "discussion" was prompted by the 1887 publication of Andrew Jenson's story of the encampment in his periodical, *The Historical Record*. After describing the visit of Orson Pratt and Erastus Snow into the Salt Lake Valley on July 21, he wrote: "The day following the main body of the Pioneers entered the valley, and encamped two or three miles south of the city, moving the camps northward and camping on the spot now known as Washington, or the Eighth Ward, Square, on the 23rd."<sup>3</sup> This he repeated in other publications throughout his long career. Many writers accepted his interpretation, and it became the prevailing opinion. In the Pioneer Centennial year of 1947, the Daughters of Utah Pioneers placed a marker on Washington Square (the location of the current Salt Lake City and County Building) to commemorate the camp.

¶ A close examination of the evidence, however, leads to a different conclusion about its location. Accounts left by members of the pioneer company provide enough details to determine where it was. ¶ William Clayton described the establishment of the camp in his journal. His entry for July 23 stated, "We traveled two miles and then formed our encampment on the banks of the creek in an oblong circle."<sup>4</sup> Thomas Bullock's journal adds the fact that the camp was made near "...a small grove of cottonwood trees on the banks of a beautiful stream."<sup>5</sup>

'on the  
banks  
of a  
beautiful  
stream'

Daniel Spencer,  
Jesse C. Little,  
William Clayton  
and Erastus Snow  
(pictured opposite,  
from left to right)  
all play a role in  
establishing the  
actual site of the  
first encampment.

*The End of the Mormon Trail*





TOP AND BOTTOM: Early views of Emigration Street (now Broadway) between Main and State Streets. On the North Side (ABOVE) are seen the old Methodist Church and, on the State Street corner, the two-story residence of Daniel Spencer.

## North Side Third South

In an 1880 Pioneer Day speech, Erastus Snow put the campsite into the context of the modern city that had grown up around it. He recounted, "...On the 23rd we made our camp on City Creek, below Emigration Street...on the old channel of the creek...It was on the south branch of the creek we formed our camp."<sup>6</sup> Three important landmarks mentioned in these accounts—City Creek's south branch, a cottonwood grove and Emigration Street—allow us to ascertain the actual location of the first campsite.

City Creek originally divided near the temple block, with one fork running south in a meandering course between Main and State streets. At Third South Street (known in pioneer days as Emigration Street), it crossed at mid-block near the cottonwood grove, described by pioneer John R. Young as "seven wind-swept, scraggy cottonwood trees." When Third South Street was laid out, a bridge was built over the creek.<sup>7</sup>

The camp's proximity to City Creek and to Third South Street is also mentioned by two other 1847 pioneers. John Brown reminisced that "on the 23 we moved north...and camped on the south side of City Creek (a little south of what is now called Emigration Street)."<sup>8</sup> Andrew P. Shumway left a similar account: "We pitched our tents...on what is

Erastus Snow  
recounted,  
"On the 23rd  
we made our  
camp on City  
Creek, below  
Emigration  
Street...on  
the old  
channel of  
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It was on the  
south branch  
of the creek  
we formed  
our camp."

now known as City Creek and just below where Emigration Street crosses the creek."<sup>9</sup>

Other supporting evidence for this interpretation concerns the proximity of the residence of Daniel Spencer and of the old Methodist Church to the former campsite. The Spencer residence was located at the northwest corner of Third South and State streets. West of the residence at mid-block is where the Methodist Church was located. Jesse C. Little later recalled: "We made our first encampment near where Daniel Spencer's residence was."<sup>10</sup> An 1890 biography of Harriet Page Wheeler Young, one of the three women in the pioneer company, described the first campsite as "running southward near the spot where the Methodist Church now stands."<sup>11</sup>

It has long been known that the first plowing in the Salt Lake Valley occurred at the northeast corner of State and Third South streets. Since 1931, a handsome bronze plaque placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution has memorialized that event. The relationship of this site to that of the campground is established by William Clayton's diary. In his entry for July 23, he wrote, "The brethren immediately rigged three plows and went to plowing a little northeast of the camp."<sup>12</sup>

These sources thus document the location of the camp on the eastern part of the city block laying

## South Side Third South





between main and State and Third and Fourth South streets (block 52 of Plat A), northwest of Washington Square.

There are several reasons why the location of the first campsite became misidentified. Early on, various identifying landmarks near the site were altered. In 1853, City Creek's south branch disappeared entirely with the consolidation of both branches of the stream down the middle of North Temple Street. The landmark cottonwood grove adjacent to the camp soon merged into the general landscape of the city. Daniel Spencer's house did not survive beyond 1891, and the Methodist Church was demolished in 1905.<sup>13</sup>

The longest-lasting landmark, located a block south and east of the campsite, was the Eighth Ward Square, or Washington Square, as it was later renamed. When the city was first surveyed, that block was reserved for public use because of the springs located there. Beginning in 1860, the square was used as the campground for incoming emigrant trains. This later usage probably led some to assume that the campsite of the original pioneers had also been there. With the passage of time and the disappearance of other landmarks in the area, Washington Square and the City and County Building became the reference point for describing the location of the original pioneer campground.

Perhaps the 1997 sesquicentennial of the arrival of Brigham Young and the pioneers would be an appropriate time to recognize the actual site of the end of the Pioneer Trail—on the banks of City Creek by a grove of cottonwood trees. ▼

*W. Randall Dixon is an archivist with the LDS Church Historical Department.*

1. "Historian's Office Journal," 23 July 1853, Historical Department, Archives Division, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Hereafter referred to as Church Archives. 2. *Christmas Herald*, December 1890, p. 3. 3. "Salt Lake County," *The Historical Record*, December 1887, p. 304. 4. *William Clayton's Journal*, (Salt Lake City, 1921), p. 312. 5. Thomas Bullock, *Journal*, 23 July 1847, Church Archives. 6. *The Utah Pioneers* (Deseret News Printing and Publishing Establishment, Salt Lake City: 1880), p. 46. 7. "Reminiscences of John R. Young," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, July 1930, p. 83. 8. John Brown, "Reminiscences and Journals," Vol. 1, p. 70, Church Archives. 9. Andrew P. Shumway, "Reminiscences 1869," p. 9, Church Archives. 10. Jesse C. Little, "Letter," 15 April 1890, Church Archives. 11. "Pioneer Women of Utah," *The Contributor*, September 1890, p. 405. 12. *William Clayton's Journal*, p. 313. 13. Randall Dixon, "Forgotten Living Landmarks of Early Salt Lake City," *Pioneer*, Spring 1995, p. 22. See also "Brooks Arcade," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 March 1891, p. 6 (the Daniel Spencer house was replaced by the Brooks Arcade complex in 1889.) For information on the Methodist Church, see "Left with Sadness," *The Deseret News*, 18 September 1905.

## the SAGA of a PIONEER LOCUST TREE

My poor Mother was heart-broken because there were no trees to be seen, for I don't remember a tree that could be called a tree," recalled Clara Decker Young of her first view of the future site of Salt Lake City on 24 July 1847.<sup>1</sup> She and her mother, Harriet Decker Young, were two of the three women who came to Utah in Brigham Young's vanguard pioneer company. Clara was married to Brigham Young, and Harriet to his brother, Lorenzo Dow Young.

Harriet, Lorenzo and their family passed their first winter in a log cabin built on their lot near City Creek. One of the first things that Harriet did at her new home was to plant the Black Locust tree seeds that she reportedly brought across the plains in the toe of an old stocking. Only those starts that she covered with buckets survived.<sup>2</sup>

Brigham Young later acquired the lot where Lorenzo and Harriet's cabin was located and erected the Beehive House in its stead. At least one of the trees survived and became part of the landscape around the new residence.

The ultimate fate of this tree was related by Harriet's granddaughter, Clarissa Young Spencer, who grew up in the Beehive House: "The back part of the Bee Hive House...consisted of a story and a half, entering through a small gate in the wall to the east side, right up to the loveliest tree, whose huge branches were laden with sweet smelling locusts and [was] planted by Harriet Page Wheeler Decker Young, my grandmother...Mother used to tell us how she carried that locust seed from Nauvoo and planted it in the ground where she first camped upon arriving here. The tree stood for many years. Later when I saw men taking it down, [I] went to President Joseph F. Smith, who at that time was President of the Latter Day Saint Church [sic], living in the Bee Hive House, and told him the history of that tree. I felt like I could not stand to have it cut down. He told me in his fine fatherly way, the tree had become a nuisance with its blossoms falling and filling the rain gutters, and the blossoms falling on the lawn, but promised me a good size stump of it should be left and would be covered with vines and a box of lovely flowers on the top. I could not help shedding a few tears, but the picture he painted appealed to me, and [I] realized that my association of 28 years in the Bee Hive, and the happy times I had spent under the protecting branches, did not and could not appeal to others as it did to me. It did help to know the stump could stand, but not long after the old stump was removed as it interfered with the cutting of the lawn. Nevertheless, the beautiful memories I have of that dear old sacred locust tree, so closely associated with my home, my grandmother, can never be taken from me. I never pass that way without my gaze wandering to the spot where it once stood."<sup>3</sup>

Part of a branch from the old locust tree is displayed in the President's Office next to the Beehive House. A remnant of the stump is preserved in the Pioneer Museum of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers in Salt Lake City.

—W. Randall Dixon

1. Young, Clara Decker, "A Woman's Experience With the Pioneer Band," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 14 (1946), p. 175.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 176; "Trees, Flowers and Birds of Utah," *Heart Throbs of the West*, Vol. 2 (Salt Lake City, 1940), p. 240.

3. Spencer, Clarissa Hamilton Young, "The Bee Hive House, 1936," copy at LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City.



# Enduring at PUEBLO

The Missouri Saints and the Mormon Battalion Sick Detachments

BY ROBERT O. DAY





Marching southwest from Fort Leavenworth, acting Lt. Col. Smith had been pushing the Mormon Battalion, and the straggling dependents following the column, as fast as humanly possible. He was not having much success for a variety of reasons. The mules pulling the wagons were mainly the same worn-out creatures that had struggled across Iowa, down to Fort Leavenworth and now across the trails of Kansas. The men, for the most part, were also worn out by the fast pace being set, and were greatly distracted by their constant concern for the welfare of the dependents and their wagons. Smith, a professional soldier, did not care to understand the Mormons or their approach to things. He was driven only by the thought that he must catch up with General Kearney or be left behind in the Army's push to the California coast.

Unknown to Smith and the Battalion, a group of Mormon pioneers had left Mississippi some months earlier, pushing hard to catch Brigham Young and his company heading West from Nauvoo. Unfortunately, they ran into difficulties that eventually brought them to winter in Pueblo, Colo. According to B.H. Roberts in The Comprehensive History of the Church: "The Mississippi company of saints originally consisted of 14 families from Monroe county, Mississippi, who under the leadership of William Crosby and John Brown left their homes April 8th, 1846, for the west, expecting to fall in with some of the first camps of the saints en route from Nauvoo to the Rocky Mountains. This company arrived at Independence, Mo., in the latter part of May, where they were joined by Robert Crow and family from Perry County, Illinois, and William Kartchner, members of the church, and a small company of non-members of the Latter-day Saint Church, but emigrants en route for Oregon. The united companies had in all 25 wagons, and organized for the western journey by choosing William Crosby captain, with Robert Crow and John Holladay counselors. It was not until they had reached the Indian country on the south bank of the Platte that the party for Oregon learned that they were traveling with a party of 'Mormons.' They soon after discovered that their 'Mormon' friends were not traveling fast enough for them and so parted company and went on ahead. They numbered 14 men and six wagons. The Mississippi company with the Illinois addition numbered 24 men with 19 wagons.

This latter company followed up the south bank of the Platte to within a few miles of Fort Laramie, where, not being able to obtain any definite information concerning the advanced companies of the saints from Nauvoo, they resolved to go no further west that fall, but to seek a suitable location on the east side of the mountains at which to winter and meantime learn something definite as to the movements of the main body of the church. At their last encampment on the Platte they met a Mr. John Kershaw, who sug-

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gested that the headwaters of the Arkansas River would be the best place at which they could winter as corn was being raised there and it was near the Spanish country where supplies could be had. This was also the destination of Mr. Kershaw, who was traveling with two ox teams and was acquainted with the route. Accordingly, on the 10th of July they left the Oregon Trail and started south and finally reached Pueblo on the 7th of August, where the company went into winter quarters, having made a journey from the initial point in Mississippi of about 1,600 miles.<sup>1</sup>

Fort Pueblo had been built prior to 1842 by trappers and traders needing protected winter quarters. In August, 1846, Francis Parkman described the fort's primitive construction as a square, with circular bastions at the corners; eight-foot cracked and dilapidated adobe walls, surmounted with half-broken slender pickets; and a dangling gate that loosely hung on wooden hinges that appeared to be ready to break. Around the inside of the plaza were six small rooms inhabited by Indian traders and mountain men. The Arkansas River ran through the valley below, among woods and groves, where there were wide corn fields and cattle grazing in green meadows.<sup>2</sup>

After visiting the fort and finding it to be occupied by trappers, frontiersmen and squaws who were "a coarse lot" of a "gentile nature," the Mississippi Saints determined to establish their quarters on the opposite side of the Arkansas River, about a half-hour's ride from the fort. There they built several log huts on the edge of the woods and the adjoining meadow. They planted turnips, pumpkins and melons for a spring harvest. At the trading post, they exchanged freshly hunted meat of game and wildlife for corn and various supplies. They also performed a variety of odd jobs, such as digging a canal near the fort. In their quarters they held many social events and saw to each other's needs. All in all, they lived a very comfortable and, for the most part, happy life.<sup>3</sup>

Located some 80 miles below Pueblo on the Arkansas River was an Army post at Bent Fort. When John Brown and William Crosby left Pueblo for Mississippi to get the rest of their families, they stopped there. When they learned that a group of teamsters had just departed for Fort Leavenworth, they hurried to overtake them to avail themselves of their protection. During their journey, on 12 September 1846, they unexpectedly came upon the Mormon Battalion rushing to catch up with General Kearney. When acting Lt. Col. Smith learned that there was a group of Mormons wintering at Pueblo, he determined that his best course of action would be to detach the sick soldiers of his command and all of the Battalion women and children—except the laundresses—and send them there. They had been slowing down the speed of the Battalion's march, and this was an effective way of dealing with the problem.



Captain Nelson Higgins, with a detachment of 10 troopers, escorted 12 sick soldiers and 27 women and children of the Battalion to the Pueblo settlement. They were provided with 30 days of rations and instructions on how to draw additional supplies from Bent Fort as they were needed. Known as the Arkansas River Sick Detachment, it was the first of three groups from the Battalion to be dispatched to Pueblo, and eventually on to the Salt Lake Valley.

The Mississippi Saints at Pueblo welcomed the travelers from the Battalion with open arms and nurturing spirits. They helped care for the sick and provided housing for them as they could until additional cabins could be built. And with an organized branch of the LDS Church in Pueblo, presided over by Absalom Porter Dowdle, a spiritual atmosphere was apparent.<sup>4</sup>

The young Latter-day Saint women were especially happy to see the men of the Battalion arrive. As Sarah J. Brown Lowry explained on 27 December 1846: "It was certainly a blessing to us that the detachment of Capt. James Brown came to Pueblo to protect us from the mountaineers and trappers who were in the fort across the river. They were determined that we should mingle with them in their wild living. Some of them had squaws with whom they were living, also some Spanish women were there. We attended a dance in their hall on one occasion. That was enough for us. We refused to go again, or to associate with them. They became very resentful and put up a tall pole in the street between the two rows of houses. They put a red shirt on the top of it to shoot at, and we were very much alarmed at their actions. When the battalion boys arrived an end was put to all this. We had peace and protection."<sup>5</sup>



Captain Brown's arrival also brought about regular dances and entertainments. Occasionally, the mountaineers would attend, but when they discovered there would be preaching before the dances began, they stopped coming.<sup>6</sup>

After Captain Brown's sick detachment of 116 people arrived 17 November 1846, the settlement was bustling with activity. With the exception of five women who remained with the Battalion as laundresses, all of the dependents were in Pueblo. Fortunately, the winter of 1846-47 was uncommonly mild, making life for all who lived there rather pleasant. As soon as their immediate needs were taken care of, each group of new arrivals began work to provide additional housing. Fourteen-foot-square houses were constructed from large cottonwood trees from the Arkansas River bottoms. Logs were split in half and joined together to form a stockade-like structure, and by early December most every-

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thing was ready for winter.

Life in Pueblo was good for the general health of both the Mississippi Saints and the Battalion dependents and sick detachments. By 27 December 1846, only four names remained on the sick list, and all were noted as "improved." No longer afflicted by exposure, fatigue, measles, "black leg disease" (caused by a continuous diet of Army rations and pickled pork), the Battalion veterans responded well. Exchanging foodstuffs with the Mississippi Saints, who had been living mostly on milk and mush, caused everyone to benefit.<sup>7</sup>

The third detachment of 57 sick Battalion members, under the command of Lt. William W. Willis, arrived at Pueblo 20 December 1846. This group had traveled the farthest, from the Rio Grande via Santa Fe, and were in the worst physical condition of all three detachments. Three soldiers had died on the trip; 13 had been left en route at Turley's Ranch, too ill to go on; and one, who was later reported as having died on the trail, had stayed in Taos. Extreme sickness, heavy December snow storms, harsh traveling conditions, a lack of rations, poor transportation and equipment were all factors that plagued their journey. But even more detrimental were the discipline, command and attitude problems that daily worsened between the officers and the enlisted men while on the march. Like a disease, this palpable feeling of animosity in the ranks began to infect Pueblo's peaceful settlement.

The enlisted men felt they were often treated unjustly, being frequently condemned by "petty tyrants" who should have treated them like brothers, not slaves. On the other hand, the officers felt that they were doing nothing more nor less than their duty. In a letter from Captain Brown to Brigham Young on 27 December 1846, he wrote: "I am undergoing to govern the men under my command by the military laws of the United States and instructions I received from the president of the Church at Council Bluffs and I have it imprinted in my hart for I received it as the word of the Lord and by the power of the priesthood. And the grace of God I will do it and carry out the principals for which I was sent."<sup>8</sup>

Not much was written by the officers at Pueblo regarding their actions or intentions, while unhappy enlisted men provided an abundance of commentary about what they felt were great injustices. Still, it is clear that the central issue of controversy between the parties had to do with military deportment. Captain Brown, as military commander of the settlement, was required to follow military procedures, as the men had not been officially mustered out of their military service. Every morning the soldiers were ordered to report for roll call, drill, parade and perform a variety of military activities. The enlisted men took offense at these requirements, apparently believing them to be no longer necessary. On at least one occasion, Privates George D. Wilson and William R. Tubbs "fled to the



solitude of the mountains to write freely in their diaries. Although they returned to camp, Wilson complained that the officers threatened death to individuals who simply wrote some 'lite words' in joke."<sup>9</sup>

On 13 January 1847, the officers assembled the entire company to read a direct order "that there be no card playing in the company, nor dancing, and any soldier or laundress that should be found speaking against an officer should be put under guard, and if a woman, she should be discharged, and that the houses of the soldiers should be cleared of any of their brethren that might be visiting, and no one was to be found out of his quarters after 8 o'clock at night under penalty of being sent up to the Guard House and tried by a court martial next day."<sup>10</sup>

And the quarreling at Pueblo was not limited to disputes between officers and enlisted men; the Mississippi Saints argued with each other, as well. "Despite their prayers, priesthood and military organization, there was an immense amount of squabbling among the Mormons at Pueblo. While it never reached the point where the command disintegrated, many soldiers looked forward to the day when they could return to the direct leadership of Brigham."<sup>11</sup>

To add to the frustration, on 25 January 1847 news was received from a reliable source that the Mexicans and Indians near Taos had massacred the white people in the area. Fearing that the rebellion might spread to the Pueblo area as well, the pioneers prepared by joining their log cabin structures to form a stockade and readied their families to fight or flee. All of the cattle were rounded up and driven north along the Fountain River, and pickets were set up to keep a constant watch. On the night of February 12, an alarm was given that a strong force of Mexicans was approaching. Scouts sent out to gather information returned to report, happily, that it was nothing more than a large herd of elk.<sup>12</sup>

During this same period of time, an effort was being made to receive instructions for the Pueblo detachments from Brigham Young. In December, Captain Brown sent John Tippets and Thomas Woolsey with an epistle for the pioneer leader. The couriers were captured by Indians. After escaping, they endured great suffering before reaching Winter Quarters Feb. 15. Until they arrived, Brigham Young believed that 170 of the Battalion were at Pueblo and the remainder were safely encamped for the winter at a mountain pass 300 miles west of Santa Fe. He did not know of Col. Cooke's decision to cross the Sonora Desert to San Diego, nor the trials being faced by the main body of the Battalion.<sup>13</sup>

On 7 April 1847, Brigham Young and his vanguard pioneer company began their journey to the Rocky Mountains. The Pueblo detachment and the remaining Mississippi Saints did not leave on their 300-mile trek north to Fort Laramie until May 24.

Brigham reached Fort Laramie June 1, where they

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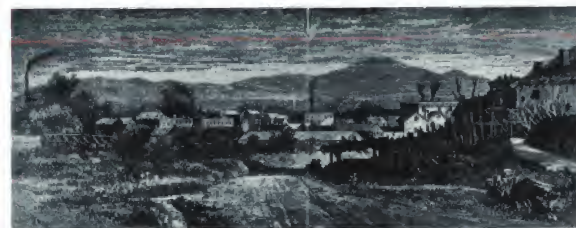
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unexpectedly met Robert Crow and George Theilkill with a party of 15 Mississippi Saints from Pueblo. Crow's party had left Pueblo before Brown's detachment, and had been waiting two weeks for Brigham's company to arrive. "The next day Amassa M. Lyman, Thomas Woolsey, Raswell Stevens and J.H. Tipets were designated as a party to go to meet the detachments of the battalion and the remainder of the Mississippi company of saints and hasten their journey to Fort Laramie, in order to follow the Pioneer company into the mountains. This party of four men



departed on their mission about midday of the 3rd of June, not without anxious solicitude on the part of the camp for their safety, as it was a dangerous mission owing to hostile bands of Indians on their route."<sup>14</sup>

Within 10 days, the four men found the Pueblo pioneers. On Sunday, June 13, Lyman spoke to the group and was able to work out the differences between the officers and the enlisted men. He urged the men to carry out the duties they had enlisted to perform, and exhorted them to leave off card playing and swearing and to return to God. The next Sunday, he again urged the men to abandon folly and be men of God, evidently humbling both officers and men.<sup>15</sup>

From Lodgepole Creek the soldiers continued northward, crossing Horse Creek to Fort Laramie. They eventually crossed the Platte on June 28, where a party of 13 men was dispatched with instructions to overtake the pioneer band and report on the detachment's condition, which they did at the junction of the Big Sandy and Green rivers on July 4.

By July 16, the Pueblo company was somewhere on the Pacific side of the Continental Divide. Although they had received no official discharge, some of the men shot off guns to celebrate what they believed to be the end of their enlistment. Many of their leaders did not find a value in being discharged as yet, for as long as they were soldiers they could continue to demand pay and provisions from the government. And since no one claimed to have legal authority to discharge them, they remained in semi-official status under the command of Captain Brown on the trail, and Brigham Young once they reached Salt Lake.<sup>16</sup>

"The detachment of the Battalion presented a problem to the Council of the Twelve. Battalion members were under orders to march to California, but the term of their enlistment had expired on the 16th of July. Did the officers in command have the right to muster them out of service? What would be the moral





Fort Pueblo, by Joel Tuan. Courtesy Pueblo Library District.

effect in the United States if these detachments were mustered out of service here in Mexican territory without other authority than the Mormon officers in command? It was finally determined, after being considered in Council, that the battalion should be mustered out of service. Captain James Brown and a small company piloted by Mr. Samuel Brannan would go to California and report to the United States Army officials there, taking with them a power of attorney from each member of these detachments of the Battalion, to collect the balance of pay due for his services.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, the Pueblo company passed through Echo Canyon. On July 28, they had their first glimpse of the Salt Lake Valley. On July 29, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, George Albert Smith, Amasa Lyman, Wilford Woodruff, Ezra T. Benson and five other authorities rode on horseback to the mouth of Emigration Canyon, where they met 140 Battalion members and dependents and 100 Mississippi Saints arriving from Pueblo. Their numbers, combined with the pioneers already in the Salt Lake Valley, raised the settlement's population to about 400 souls, and their wagons by about 60, horses and mules by 100 and cattle by 300 head.<sup>18</sup>

The following morning the Council met with Battalion officers before releasing them to ride to nearby hot springs, where they could wash and refresh themselves. In the evening, all of the pioneers gath-

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ered for a general meeting with Brigham Young, during which he spoke until he was hoarse. At the end of his speech, he asked the Battalion men to build a 40-by-20-foot bowery on the temple lot, where the settlers could hold their meetings out of the sun.<sup>19</sup>

It seemed almost a miracle that a second group, such as the Pueblo detachments, should be so available as to arrive only five days after Brigham Young's pioneer party, and that they should be so quickly available, with so many of the abilities and skills needed to lay the foundations necessary for the first settlement of pioneers into the valley of the Great Salt Lake and all who would soon follow. Could such a miracle come from other than a Provident Hand that shaped the events to provide for and temper a people for a great and marvelous work that would come forth from the "mountain of the Lord" in the last days? ▼

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*First Irrigation of Anglo-Saxons in America*, by J. Leo Fairbanks, 1933. Courtesy Museum of Church History and Art.



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PIONEERING INNOVATIVE  
IRRIGATION  
TECHNIQUES  
TO MAKE UTAH'S  
DESERT BLOSSOM







FULL DAY BEFORE BRIGHAM YOUNG COULD SAY that “this is the right place,” Utah’s 1847 pioneers fired the first volley in their battle for survival in their new home in the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Pioneer journalist

Thomas Bullock records: “Friday, 23 July 1847...About half past 11 [the] Committee reported they had staked off a piece of fine ground 40 rods by 20 for Potatoes, also a suitable place for beans, Corn & buck wheat. The soil is fertile, friable loam, with fine gravel. At 12 o’clock the first furrow was turned by Captain Taft’s Company. There were 3 Plows & 1 Harrow at work most of the afternoon. Taft’s Plow got broke. At 2 o’clock the brethren commenced building a dam cutting trenches to convey the water, to irrigate the Land.”<sup>1</sup> Bringing water to their crops was not only critical to their ability to grow crops and build a city.

It was, in the opinion of many, a literal fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. “The desert shall rejoice,” Isaiah wrote, “and blossom as the rose” (Isaiah 35:1).

Watering their desert “rose” was an awesome undertaking for the pioneers—an impossible task, according to some. Zebulon Pike, who traveled through the area in 1810, compared the Great Basin to the deserts of Africa.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Bullock noted that “Wilford Woodruff described the ‘vast rich fertile valley’ that was clothed ‘with the Heaviest garb of green vegetation [sic].’” The valley—or, more accurately, the basin—was “abounding with the best fresh water springs rivulets creeks & Brooks & Rivers.”<sup>3</sup>

Allowing for different responses to identical landscaping, anyone familiar with current Salt Lake City knows that “desert” was probably an appropriate way to describe the new homeland the pioneers entered in 1847—and that Wilford Woodruff must have been something of an optimist.

Although there were most likely a few men in Brigham Young’s vanguard pioneer company who were familiar with the processes of irrigation, for the most part the Utah pioneers became irrigation experts by accident. Speaking to the First National Irrigation Congress some 44 years after he entered the Salt Lake Valley, Wilford Woodruff said, “Of course all this company—nearly the whole of us were born and raised in the New England states—of course we had no experience in irrigation. We pitched our camp, put some teams onto our plows...and undertook to plow the earth, but we found neither wood nor iron were strong enough to make furrows here in this hard soil. It was like adamant. Of course we had to turn water on it.”<sup>4</sup>

W

atering the Rose





The first dam these men improvised was about eight feet wide, intended to turn the waters of City Creek onto a plot of ground they planned to turn into a potato patch. It was amateurish work. During the next few years, these New Englanders-turned-irrigators improvised, experimented and refined their skills until they became quite proficient at bringing life-giving water to dry, parched earth.

They built a single canal to water the Big Field, a 10-square-mile area of land stretching north from Big Cottonwood Creek. Brigham Young instructed them to “prepare pools, vats, tubs, reservoirs, and ditches at the highest points of land in your field or fields that may be filled during the night and be drawn off to any point you may find necessary.”<sup>5</sup> They abandoned the concept of riparian water rights, which called for water to be returned to the stream substantially undiminished, by granting water rights to the land where irrigation water was first put to beneficial use.<sup>6</sup>

According to historians Leonard J. Arrington and Dean May, “Obviously these Mormons, New England farmers and mechanics, went through a long and costly period of trial and error before they learned the arts of field irrigation—whether a given type of soil and seed would need much or little water, whether corrugations or flooding would promote maximum yields of certain crops on terrains of given slope, soil texture and mineral content. No doubt experience in the field led to occasional successful innovations in irrigation practice.”<sup>7</sup>

Within three years of settling the Salt Lake Valley, pioneer farmers were sloshing through 16,000 acres of irrigated land.<sup>8</sup> That number steadily increased, and by 1865, 153,949 acres were being integrated by 277 major canals totalling 1,044 miles in length.<sup>9</sup>

Irrigation and water works proved so crucial to abundant harvest that the LDS Church provided help in planning, directing and financing the water

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projects for various communities. The Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society, formed in 1856, taught farmers improved irrigation methods. And as faithful Saints spread throughout the West under Brigham Young’s direction, they shared their irrigation expertise with Gentile neighbors who gladly adopted their methods. As a result, Utah’s pioneering Mormons gained an international reputation for their irrigation abilities; within two decades of their arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, tales of Mormon irrigation methods had spread to as far away as India.<sup>10</sup>

That reputation, however, was short-lived. Once the rest of the world had seen what irrigation could do, new irrigation ideas were developed elsewhere. The innovative ideas conceived by the Utah pioneers were soon replaced with newer and better technology as other areas of the West experienced rapid irrigation development. Within a decade of their ascendancy to international irrigation pre-eminence, Utah’s pioneers lost their place as the leader of the irrigation pack.<sup>11</sup>

Irrigation still plays a vital role in Utah’s agricultural community. Mother Nature makes sure of that. However, these days most irrigation advances and experiments are conducted in universities and laboratories rather than on Utah farms and gardens. But historians today give at least some credit for the current state of irrigation art to Utah’s pioneers, who developed and refined irrigation systems and water rights far beyond the primitive watering methods that earlier inhabitants of the area attempted. They made their mark on the agricultural history of the American West by finding ways to bring water—and with it, new, unexpected life—to the desert.

And make it blossom. Like a rose. ▼

*Kellene Ricks Adams is a freelance writer living in Salt Lake City.*



Within two decades of their arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, tales of Mormon irrigation methods had spread as far away as India.

Plowing, by Minerva Teichert, watercolor on paper. Courtesy Bea and Morris Johnson private collection.



"WE PITCHED OUR CAMP, PUT SOME TEAMS ONTO OUR PLOWS...AND UNDERTOOK TO PLOW THE EARTH"

—WILFORD WOODRUFF



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1. Will Bagley, *The Pioneer Camp of the Saints: The 1846 and 1847 Mormon Trail Journals of Thomas Bullock*, (Spokane, Wash.: The Arthur H. Clark Company), 1997, p. 234.
2. Leonard J. Arrington and Dean May, "A Different Mode of Life: Irrigation and Society in Nineteenth-Century Utah," *Agricultural History*, vol. XLIX, No. 1, January 1975, p. 4.
3. *Journals of Thomas Bullock*, p. 235.
4. Arrington and May, p. 7.
5. Ibid.
6. Carlos Whiting, "Mormon Contributions to Irrigation," *Reclamation Era: A Water Review Quarterly*, No. 1, p. 62.
7. Arrington and May, p. 11.
8. Whiting, p. 61.
9. Kelly C. Harper, "The Mormon Role in Irrigation Beginnings and Diffusions in the Western States: An Historical Geography," 1974, master's thesis, Brigham Young University.
10. Arrington and May, p. 12.
11. Harper, p. 78.



# Pioneer Trek 1997



*Independence Rock, Wyo. Waiting for permission to proceed. June 18 '97  
Diana Pitcher*

*It was the centerpiece of the 1997 LDS Church's Pioneer Sesquicentennial observance, yet it was planned and led largely by non-Mormons. Even so, organizers and participants in and out of the church view the 1996 and 1997 commemorative wagon trains as a religious experience.*

*Arguably, the most telling moment of the entire Nauvoo-to-Council Bluffs and Omaha-to-Salt Lake City journey—more significant, perhaps, than the triumphal entry July 22 into This Is the Place State Park in Emigration Canyon—occurred the day before. The wagon train had just crested Little Mountain Summit, the spot where apostle Orson Pratt became the first Mormon to view the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. The modern-day trekkers shouted for joy. And then, instead of charging ahead into the valley, they paused to kneel together to offer a prayer of thanksgiving—much as the pioneers they were honoring had done 150 years earlier.*





BY

R. Scott Lloyd

*Lutheran Camp from Church of the Place, State Park  
Jeffrey City, N.M. 6-21-97 Diana Pitcher*

## *Sesquicentennial Celebration Extends*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

Diana Pitcher



*June 30, 1974, Picturing of the Mormon National Monument Trail, 1847-1848, Diana Pitcher*

## *Across Miles, Faiths and Families*



*Fort Casper, Wyoming-Mormon Trail - Diana Pitcher 6-14-97*



"This is a different wagon train than any I've been on," commented Ben Kern, wagon boss for the Wyoming portion of the train. He has led five such endeavors in five years, including the 2,400-mile Oregon Trail Wagon Train in 1993.

"For most everybody on this train, their ancestors were involved in some way or another [in coming to Utah as pioneers]," Kern said. "This is a spiritual event for most of the people."

Kern and about 25 of the participants were together last year to re-enact the Iowa portion of the trek, beginning 17 June 1996. On that day a flatboat carried their wagons across the Mississippi River from Nauvoo, Ill., to Montrose, Iowa, in the Authentic Mormon Trail Wagon Train sponsored by JL2 Corp.

It was one of two trains that trekked across Iowa to the Missouri River, commemorating not only the forced exodus of the Latter-day Saints from Illinois but the Iowa state sesquicentennial, as well.

The other train was organized by the Iowa Mormon Trails Association, a largely non-LDS group with chapters in the 12 counties through which the trail passes. Keenly interested in local history, IMTA members had done extensive trail marking and research, drawing from the trail a sense of heritage.

As the trains came through, townspeople along the way welcomed them with feasts and festivals. At the pioneers' Locust Creek Campsite Number 2, near Seymour, they celebrated William Clayton's writing of "Come, Come, Ye Saints" on that spot. In Murray, the wagon trains camped in wheel ruts made 150 years before.

Their arrival in Council Bluffs on July 13 coincided with the Grand Encampment celebration, including a re-creation of the Mormon Battalion mustering-in and the dedication by LDS Church President Gordon B. Hinckley of the reconstructed Kanesville Tabernacle.

By late summer, interest had grown considerably in the 1997 re-enactment of the journey from historic Winter Quarters near present-day Omaha, Neb., to Salt Lake City. Four groups planned separate treks, potentially taxing the capacity of the land and the patience of landowners and residents along the way.

"Three or four wagon trains running down the road almost at the same time just doesn't work," explained Kern. "The communities put something on for one wagon train, and then two or three days later another one comes along, and you just burn them out."

The matter was resolved at a "Wagon Train Scheduling Summit" in Scottsbluff, Neb., Aug. 30-31, 1996. A single train with separate companies of wagons and handcarts would make the journey. The main

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group—including most of the JL2 participants—would leave from Omaha April 21, following the historic path traversed by Brigham Young and his vanguard party in 1847. A smaller group—consisting mostly of IMTA members—would depart from Council Bluffs April 19 and go south following the Oxbow Trail that was traversed by later Mormon emigrant trains, then join the other group at Kearney, Neb., on May 7. A committee consisting initially of three LDS Church members plus four non-members with extensive wagon train experience, including Kern, was chosen. It was chaired by Brian J. Hill, president of the Nebraska Mormon Trails Association and the Kearney Nebraska Stake of the LDS Church.

A limited number of wagoneers, horseback riders and handcart pullers would be allowed to join for as much of the 97-day, 1,041-mile journey as they desired. As it turned out, up to 600 participants joined for a day or more, with a core of 150-160 for the entire trek.

Though it was to play no official role, the LDS Church gave extensive help in organization, registration and coordination of news media coverage.

What resulted was an orderly, if rather unwieldy procession past the picturesque Mormon Trail landmarks of Nebraska, Wyoming and Utah.

"We've run real good," Kern said. "We've averaged 30-35 wagons across Nebraska and Wyoming. I think a time or two we had maybe 40 wagons. Then, when we got close to Independence Rock, the BLM wanted to cut the wagons back to protect the landowners and the trail. A lot of people were upset with them, but I understand where they're coming from. If they didn't do what they're doing, we wouldn't have a trail out there."

Sitting in a restaurant at Utah's East Canyon Resort four days before the trek's conclusion, Kern was glad it was almost over. "I kind of figured that when we got toward Salt Lake, it was going to get bigger," he said. "I didn't think it would get quite this big, but it sure has, and I'm just thankful we don't have any more days than we've got. And I'm really concerned about pulling this hill...I feel like we might have some problems, but I hope we don't."

He was referring to the grade up to Big Mountain Summit. As it turned out, the only mishap occurred before the wagons ever got to the hill. Descending from the plateau in East Canyon where they had camped for two days, a runaway wagon with six passengers hit a bump, throwing the driver out. Then the mules bolted and the wagon bounced down the hill and flew apart. Passengers and mules suffered minor injuries.

Despite this and a few previous accidents, many in the train shared the sentiment Kern expressed, that it



had divine protection. "When we put this many people and this many horses together, and no more mishaps than we've had, why somebody's got to be looking over you," Kern said. At This Is the Place State Park, where more than 50,000 spectators welcomed the trekkers, President Hinckley declared: "You have done something really extraordinary. You have caught the imagination of us all."

He also echoed the belief of many: that it is unlikely there would ever be another such trek, modern-day restrictions being what they are.

Wagon train participants were almost as diverse as the 19th Century pioneers they honored. Here are profiles of a few of them:

At his brother-in-law's funeral in 1993, **Chuck Quillin** heard from his niece that a group was planning to make a wagon train trek to Salt Lake City in 1996 covering the Mormon Trail. Planning to retire in 1996 from Chicago Bridge and Iron, he jumped at the chance, though he is not LDS. "It's been all my life I've wanted to do something like this, either on horseback or wagon train," said Quillin of New Sharon, Iowa. Though she does not ride much, his wife, Mary, agreed to go with him.



With some running gears he bought in South Dakota, Quillin custom built a bed with plenty of shelves and compartments. "We lived in a house trailer for the first three or four years we were married, and we kind of know how important those little storage areas are," he said.

Quillin built his wagon bed to extend over the wheels, making extra seats. "I thought I was building something unique," he said. "Then, when we got to the Stuhr Museum in Grand Island, Neb., the historian came out and said, 'I'm glad to see you built a wagon with an overjet on it.' And he brought me documents to show where people built wagons with overjets back in the pioneer days, same as I did. So I guess maybe I'm a pioneer at heart."

The Quillins were about two days outside their Council Bluffs destination last year when a serious accident occurred. Mary was holding the horses while Chuck went to get water for them. A runaway team spooked them, and they stepped on her foot and ran over her with the wagon. She spent the next six weeks in the hospital recovering from a broken pelvis, cracked ribs and vertebra and a broken foot.

"Everybody asked her if she was going on this year's trek, and she said, 'Well, sure!' I said I would get another team of horses, but she wouldn't have nothing to do with that. 'It wasn't the horses' fault,' she said."

**Bert and Lola Merrill** have a covered wagon and 300 horses in St. David, Ariz. But along the trail from Omaha, they put 300 horses under the hood of a truck and drove a travel trailer.

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the wagon train,"  
said Lola Merrill...  
"So we  
put her name in,  
and here we  
pull up  
this pedigree."*

The Merrills are LDS family history missionaries, whose role it was to set up a bank of computers at each campsite and search a database for anyone interested in finding Mormon pioneer ancestors. Using FamilySearch, the database found in LDS family history libraries and most stake centers, the Merrills served more than 1,400 curious people between Salt Lake City and Omaha. "If they give us an ancestor's name, we try and find it on the file," Lola explained. "And we can usually tell them, if they're wanting to know, whether the ancestor came across the plains. We can tell by where they were married or where the children were born if they came across."

"If they died in Salt Lake, we know they made it all the way across," Bert added. "A lot of entries have notes that tell whether some died onboard ship."

The Merrills carried no printer to provide printouts. Rather, they told people where they could find the nearest LDS family history center to obtain a printout.

"We were in Gothenberg, Neb., when a lady who wasn't a member of the church came in and said she had been out to the cemetery and just had a feeling that she needed to come see the wagon train," Lola said. The woman's husband had a relative who had been unsuccessful at finding ancestral records even after checking the Mormon records. So we put her name in, and here we pull up this pedigree. This lady was in tears. She started copying, and we told her that she could go to the family history center and get a paper copy."

Bert told of a man from Denver, also a non-Mormon, who visited the wagon train when it was in Martin's Cove, Wyo. The man was passing through, and something told him to come into Martin's Cove. His voice breaking with emotion, Bert related: "I saw him looking at our sign and I asked if we could be of help. He said he had started his family tree two or three weeks ago and had come to a dead end. I sat him down and showed him what we had, and he said it was an answer to his prayer. He had no idea why he had come. He had no interest in Martin's Cove. We told him where the nearest family history center to his home was located, and he said it was right down the road from where he lived."



**Steve Kruman** proudly speaks of having the only Sons of Utah Pioneers chapter he is aware of operating east of the Mississippi. His Harmony, Pennsylvania, Chapter has 12 members. Yet Kruman has no Utah pioneer ancestry.

"If you want to see a depiction of my ancestors, you would have to see 'Fiddler on the Roof,'" he said. His ancestral roots are among the Jewish settlements in the Ukraine.

After converting to the LDS Church at age 19, Kruman now feels a kinship with Mormon as well as Jewish forebears. At a recent fireside, he showed film



clips from “Fiddler on the Roof” and an LDS video, comparing scenes of Jews and Mormons being driven from their homes.

While a student at Brigham Young University, he became acquainted with the SUP when a friend showed him a copy of *Pioneer* magazine. He initially joined the East Mill Creek Chapter in Utah. “I had so much fun, I said I would like to do this on my own in the East. And so, they said if you’ve got 10 members you can have a chapter,” he recounted. The new chapter chose the name because of the significance of the town of Harmony in LDS Church history—although it no longer exists—and because harmony is a pioneer virtue.

Last year, Kruman, wife Jodi, and their five children who range in age from 12 to 2, attended the Grand Encampment celebration in Council Bluffs. “We had a great time,” he said. “My oldest daughter didn’t want to dress in the old pioneer clothes. But she went and saw the wagon trains come in. She loved the horses, and asked, ‘Can we go with them to Salt Lake next year?’ So she gets the credit for talking us into going.”

The family joined the trek in Fort Bridger, Wyoming, July 9, as day riders in wagons. He looked unsuccessfully for other SUP members, most of whom were participating in the organization’s Sesquicentennial Motorized Bus Trek (please see sidebar). But he did find a handcart sponsored by the Sugarhouse Chapter. He had his picture taken next to it.

“We’ve made lots of friends,” he said. “We’ve often ended up riding people’s horses for them when they got tired of riding. We decided we wanted to do the handcarts today, and everybody made it except the 10-year-old, who got tired and took a half-hour break in the bus. Even the 5-year-old had been whining a good bit of the way, but then she realized everyone else was walking, and she got into the spirit of it and was really keeping up and having a wonderful time. The 2-year-old rode in the wagon, and a photographer took her picture.”

With a 4:30 a.m. wake-up time, sleep was at a premium, Kruman said. Especially with activities along the way lasting into the evening. “Like last night, we had a fireside in Henefer with Elder M. Russell Ballard [an LDS apostle] and the Utah Symphony. I was in a choir comprised of trek participants, and we sang the LeRoy Robertson arrangement of ‘Come, Come, Ye Saints.’ It was tough to get up this morning.”

As a surprise the morning after they get home, Kruman plans a surprise for the children: “I’m going to wake them up at 4:30 with the dinging of the same kind of bell they used here.”

**Takako Sekiguchi** and her husband, **Osamu**, heard of the Mormon Trail Wagon Train in Tokyo, where her husband is second counselor in the Nagano Ward bishopric. Osamu, who has responsibility for public affairs, was asked by the LDS Church to find someone from Japan who could join the trek. “But he couldn’t

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*she said.*

find anyone,” she said. “Then finally, he was asked to join the trek because he is a free-lance writer. We considered it a lot; three months is so long, and Japan is far away from the United States. Then we ordered several books about the pioneers, and the stories touched our hearts. We thought this trek would be a great part of our lives. And we have two boys, 9 and 7, and I thought it would be kind of an adventure for them. Finally we decided to come.”

It was hard at first, she said. “The weather was so cold, and everything was new to us. We had so much to learn. At first I felt one day was one week, and one week was one month. But now, oh, I have had a wonderful time and we have learned lots of wonderful pioneer stories.”

Just as angels watched over the pioneers 150 years ago, she said, “even now I feel angels watched over us. There were some accidents on the trek. But all people who got in accidents came back to the trek.”

She told of accident victims who were certain they had suffered broken bones, but after they received blessings from holders of the LDS priesthood, no broken bones could be found.

“I cannot explain how, but I saw with my eyes,” she said. ▼

*R. Scott Lloyd is a writer with the LDS Church News.*

## The SUP's 1997 Pioneer Commemoration

was similar to the 1947 event. Similar—but different.

Instead of cars with cut-out wagons and oxen, members of the SUP boarded air-conditioned buses to make the 11-day commemorative trek from Nauvoo to Salt Lake City. And instead of limiting the size of the party to 143 men, three women and two children, the trek was open to all members and spouses who wanted to make the trip.

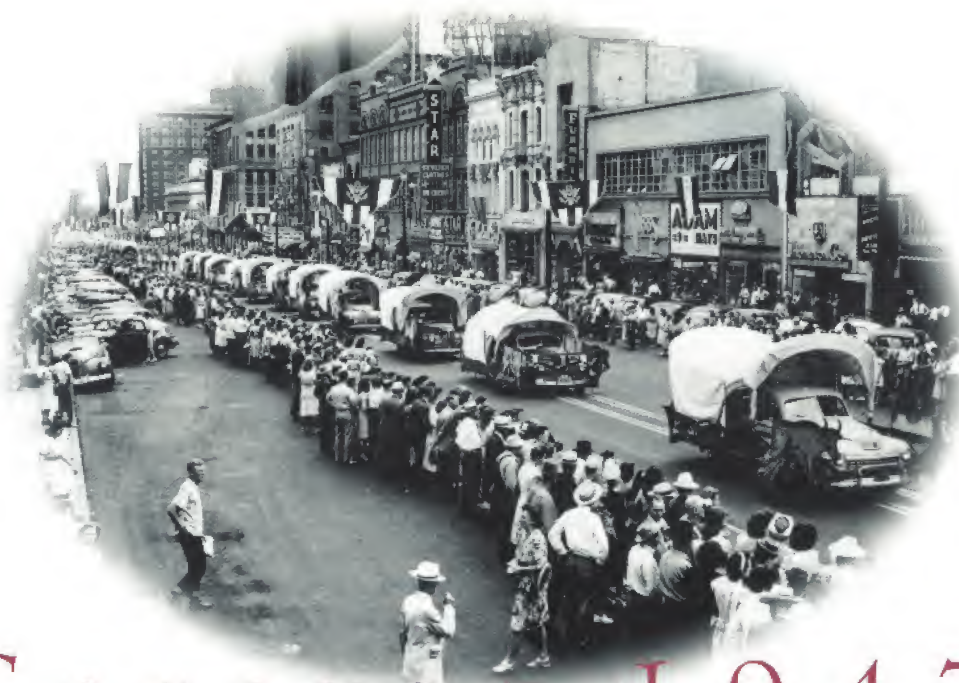
But the 1997 SUP trekkers were driven by the same desire that motivated their 1947 brothers to make the trip in an automobile caravan: to honor the memory of their pioneer forebears.

“I can appreciate what the pioneers had to go through just seeing the trail,” said Duncan Barlow, of Layton. “It’s one thing to hear their stories, but to actually see the trail means a lot.”

Following the trail, visiting historic sites and listening to the narrative of Lamar Berrett, a retired church history professor from BYU, contemporary SUP members gained an increased appreciation for the efforts of the Utah pioneers during the course of their trip. “Most of the pioneers walked the trail,” said Todd Olsen, whose father was part of the Centennial Trek. “When the soles of their shoes wore out, there was no store to buy shoes, so they walked barefoot.”

Added Beatrice Black, who traveled all the way from Brisbane, Australia, to join the SUP trek: “This trek has made me appreciate my own blessings that much more.”





# Caravan 1947

Another Trek, Another Time

The idea seems quaint today: a caravan of 72 automobiles, draped with wagon covers and oxen cutouts to resemble covered wagons.

But 50 years ago, the Sons of Utah Pioneers Centennial Trek accomplished in its day what this year's Mormon Trail Sesquicentennial Wagon Train re-enactment has done. It paid tribute to the pioneers of 1846–47 and focused the country's attention on the Mormon pioneer legacy.

The eight-day trek departed from Nauvoo, Ill., and ended in Salt Lake City on July 22, 1947. Like this year's wagon train, it had as its destination This Is the Place Monument at the mouth of Emigration Canyon. The monument itself was unveiled two days later in a dedication over which LDS Church President George Albert Smith presided.

Paralleling Brigham Young's vanguard party, the caravan was composed of 143 men, three women and two boys. Following the Mormon Trail as closely as possible, it passed through Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming and Utah.

In a 27 July 1947 Church News article, editor Henry A. Smith wrote: "The covered-wagon train made an imposing appearance as it sped along the highways and passed through the towns of these five states. Great throngs of people had assembled to see them parade through cities... Frequent stops were made during which the trekkers were greeted by mayors and city and state officials and the modern pioneers, looking the part as far as moustaches and beards were concerned, were given refreshments and participated in local celebrations planned for their benefit."

In Gering, Neb., for example, the caravan was part of a regular Oregon Trail Day parade witnessed by 40,000 people.

At each stop, a previously assigned trekker would give a brief description of that spot's historic significance pertaining to the 1847 pioneer journey. Like Brigham Young's group, the caravan was organized with a presidency, and with captains of 50 and captains of 10. Meals consisted of deer, elk antelope, buffalo, and other pioneer fare.

Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then a member of the LDS Church's Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, went along, and at each nightly encampment, gave a talk about the fundamentals of the church and its accomplishments during its hundred-year history.

"Elder Kimball, with Mrs. Kimball, was a special guest of the Sons of Utah Pioneers," Smith wrote. "The couple endeared themselves to all of the trekkers as they took part whole-heartedly in the camp life, the programs and the travel schedules. They stood with the 'pioneers' in chow lines, they slept on the ground, and in every way were a part of the caravan... Elder Kimball is a grandson of Heber C. Kimball, who was a counselor and a close associate of Brigham Young in the first pioneer company."

State and city officials along the way received mementos prepared for them by the Sons of Utah Pioneers especially for the trek. The mayor of North Platte, Neb., for example, was given a replica of the roadometer made during the 1847 trek to measure distances covered.

"Over each state they traversed, the caravan was given a special police escort and frequently they were met outside cities by additional police and city officials who preceded them through the streets in parade fashion," the Church News article related.

President George Albert Smith, dressed in his characteristic Scouter uniform, met the caravan at Henefer, Utah, where SUP President Wendell J. Ashton gave him some Mormon Battalion bookends made especially for the trek. He and Utah Gov. Herbert B. Maw rode with the caravan over Big Mountain and Little Mountain to the mouth of Emigration Canyon. There 5,000 spectators cheered the caravan at the new monument, where it was met by Salt Lake City Mayor Earl J. Glade.

From there a bus carrying surviving 19th Century pioneers led the caravan to a celebration at Sugar House Plaza, where revelers gathered to provide a fitting and thrilling climax to the 1947 Pioneer Centennial.



**M**EMBERS OF THE Settlement Canyon Chapter of the Sons of Utah Pioneers have joined forces with the local Daughters of the Utah Pioneers camp and Goshute Indian representatives to protect a parcel of land that may have served as an Indian burial ground and as Tooele, Utah's, first pioneer cemetery.

Developers in the area have unearthed skeletal remains and coffin remnants during excavation procedures prior to the construction of a new subdivision. Pieces of Indian rock art and pottery have also been found in the area, leading Goshute representatives to conclude that Indians used the land for burial long before Mormon pioneers arrived in Tooele.

The DUP has constructed a monument in the area noting the pioneer cemetery, surrounded by a 33-by-33-square-foot fence. But all of the bones and artifacts have been discovered outside of the fenced area. "We believe that many pioneers were buried outside of that particular fenced area," said Settlement Canyon Chapter President George McKellar.

So SUP, DUP and Goshute leaders have been working with the land developer to preserve and protect the burial site. And thankfully, the developer, LaMar Penovich, has been cooperative. "I am a member of this community and my objective is to keep people happy," Penovich said. "I will do all I can to treat this area with respect and reverence."

While the area is being studied, McKellar is working with local elected officials to see that this kind of thing doesn't happen again in the future. "I want to make sure that [the] property...is clearly marked so that 50 or 100

years from now, no one can go in there and start digging on that property," the chapter president said. "I would also like to see the cemetery officially named the Tooele City Pioneer Cemetery."

#### HURRICANE VALLEY CHAPTER

### Encouraging Children to Preserve Pioneer Past

The Hurricane Valley Chapter held their Sesquicentennial project recently when they sponsored a Pioneer Ancestor Essay contest among 4th, 5th and 6th grade students at Hurricane Elementary School.

The rules were simple: just write about an ancestor at least two generations back. Tell the ancestor's name, date of birth and a brief life sketch. Children were encouraged to share enough information that readers could feel they know the ancestor. Some 84 students entered the contest. The top 10 winners received a \$20 cash prize, and the grand prize winner—Kyle Urias—also received a beautiful plaque engraved with his picture on it.

"At least 84 young people now know more about their heritage," said Harold Cripps, chairman of the project. "Perhaps by next year, hundreds more will also know."

#### GEORGE A. SMITH CHAPTER

### A Donation for the Library

A set of the *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* has been donated to the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers by the organization's George A. Smith Chapter.

"The magazine was published quarterly from 1910 to 1940," said O. Geral Wilde, chapter secretary. "While the set is not complete, it is still a worthy addition to the SUP Library."

The chapter obtained the magazines from Richard Horsley at Pioneer Book in Provo. Mr. Horsley said he will continue to search for the missing copies in the set so that the SUP's collection can be complete.

A full listing of the collection is available at the library at the SUP National Headquarters in Salt Lake City.



SETTLEMENT CANYON

## Chapter Works to Preserve a Sacred Place



Goshute Indians. ABOVE LEFT: Indian Graveyards, ca. 1860.



## An Evening with an Old Friend

One of the greatest figures in human history, the prophet Joseph Smith, visited the East Mill Creek Chapter recently, in the form of actor Karlin Myers of Kanab. "Many of the chapter members were struck by Karlin's resemblance to the prophet, his genuine manner and his casual, real-life, conversational style," said chapter President Martin Empey. "It wasn't like an actor delivering a carefully scripted, well-rehearsed, exacting performance. It was more like a man sitting in the parlor, casually reminiscing and sharing the wisdom he's gained over his lifetime. It was truly an evening spent with an old friend."

## JORDAN RIVER TEMPLE CHAPTER

## Chapter Officers Announced

Nygel Wilson, a native of South Africa who now lives and works in the Salt Lake Valley, was the featured speaker during a recent meeting of the Jordan River Temple Chapter. He spoke of his life in South Africa during the dark days of Apartheid, and how he brought his wife and son to the United States to seek a new life.

"It was refreshing to hear someone who thinks America is a great place to live," said chapter member Gene Bond.

The Jordan River Temple Chapter meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Riverton Senior Center. Dinner (usually pot luck) and a program are planned for each meeting. "The programs have been outstanding," Bond said.

### Chapter officers are:

**President:** Doyle Jones  
**President Elect:** Blaine Crump  
**Secretary-Treasurer:** Louis Pickett  
**Chaplain:** Booth Maycock  
**Awards Chairman:** Morris Bennion  
**Trek Chairman:** Glen Rose  
**Historian:** Richard Vincent.



## NEW MEMBERS

Leon C. Astle (TF)	Allen Gardner (TF)	Stephen D. Robison (SC)
LaMoyné E. Anderson (SD)	Louis Bartl Gappmayer (AL)	Melvin K. Stephens (BV)
John D. Adams (JRT)	Gordon S. Haycock (HR)	Elwood Shaffer (TB)
Robert B. Andres (JRT)	Brian S. Jacobs (BY)	Rodney M. Simonsen (BV)
Douglas W. Burnett (BY)	T.B. (Dell) Klingler (AL)	Clifford D. Sadler (AL)
Jerry M. Brown (AL)	William Blair Klingler (AL)	Michael B. Snow (BH)
Kenneth M. Bridges (AL)	Ardel Holmes Loveland (BE)	Keyne J. Thorne (CM)
Orson T. Casper (SD)	Gilbert M. McBride (AL)	Gerald J. Vertrees (AL)
Alan Clark (USRV)	James P. Neeley (TF)	David H. Weller (ER)
Charles Ward Despain Jr. (CM)	Jeff Nelson (AL)	Ross Whittaker (BH)
Norman R. Dobson (CM)	Clyde L. Pritchett (SP)	Clyde Lund White (AL)
DeLane Alan Davidson (HAR)	Gene W. Palmer (USRV)	Lewis E. Weyland (SC)
Fred Joyce Diamond (PAL)	Maurice X. Pia (AL)	Richard O. Woodward (BH)
Rawney Ellis (CENT)	Joseph S. Paulick (SC)	Kent Whittaker (BH)
D. Eric Ensign (AL)	George Lee Romney (AL)	Don Worthen (AL)
Craig S. Fitt (AL)	Gerald Romney (AL)	Ronald K. Young (USRV)
Mac Gardner (AL)	George H. Rollins (JRT)	Thomas R. Pocock (AL)

*In loving memory of our  
SUP brothers who have recently joined their pioneer  
forebears on the other side of the veil:*

## CHAPTER ETERNAL

Leon Ray Adams, 64 St. George, Utah <i>Mesa Chapter</i>	George F. Larkin Ogden, Utah <i>Ogden Chapter</i>	Andrew Elwin Schow Layton, Utah <i>Buena Ventura Chapter</i>
Stephen L. Alley Bountiful, Utah <i>Mills Chapter</i>	George Nelson Tooele, Utah <i>Settlement Canyon Chapter</i>	Kenneth W. Shields Tooele, Utah <i>Settlement Canyon Chapter</i>
Joseph Lester Barlow, 90 San Jose, California <i>Salt Lake Chapter</i>	Eldon Pace Ogden, Utah <i>Ogden Chapter</i>	Jed E. Smith Escalante, Utah <i>Hole in the Rock Chapter</i>
Ernest Clarence Clayton Salt Lake City <i>Mills Chapter</i>	Wendell Jonathan Packer, 74 Salt Lake City <i>Olympus Hills Chapter</i>	Max Yarbrough Stockton, Utah <i>Settlement Canyon Chapter</i>
Ocie Jay Hadley, 78 Murray, Utah <i>Murray Chapter</i>	L. Clyde Park, 85 Idaho Falls, Idaho <i>Eagle Rock Chapter</i>	

PIONEER REJOICES IN THE LIVES OF THESE GOOD MEN, AND EXTENDS ITS SYMPATHIES AND GOOD WISHES TO FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES.



*Ready for  
Burial...  
Until  
She Opened  
Her Eyes*

**A**LTHOUGH TRAGEDY WAS A FREQUENT companion for Utah's pioneers, occasionally tragic things turned out...well, better than expected. Fanny Fry Simons (1842–1916) was 17 years old when she pulled a handcart across the plains to Utah as part of the 1859 George Rowley Company. In her journal, she records the following:

"I recollect one day the captain put me to a cart with six people's luggage on and only three to pull it—a woman, a lad of 16, and I, 17—and there was nine days' bread. All grown people were allowed 20 pounds of luggage apiece and their cooking utensils besides. That made quite a load for us. I know it was the hardest day's work I ever remember doing in all my life before or since. We had to pull up quite a long hill, and part of it was steep. In climbing we got behind one of the teams for the oxen to help us, for it was all we could do to keep it moving. Captain Rowley came up and called us lazy, and that I did not consider we were at all.

"While pulling this heavy load, I looked and acted strange. The first thing my friend Emmie knew I had fallen under the cart, and before they could stop it, the cart had passed over me, and I lay at the back of it on the ground.

"When my companions got to me, I seemed perfectly dead. Emmie could not find any pulse at all, and there was not a soul around. They were, she thought, all ahead, so she stood thinking what to do when Captain Rowley came up to us. "What have you got there, Emmie?" he said. "Oh my, Fanny is dead," she said. It frightened him, so he got off his horse and examined me closely but could not

find any life at all. He asked Emmie to stay with me and he would go and stop the company and send a cart back for me, which he did.

"When I came to myself, my grave was dug two feet deep, and I was in a tent. The sisters had sewed me up to the waist in my blanket, ready for burial. I opened my eyes and looked at them.

"I was weak for some time after. I did not fully recover during the rest of the journey. Through it all I found I had a great many friends in the company."

**Samuel Hamer** WAS born in England in 1831. His family joined the Church and crossed the plains in 1851, but Samuel's father died during the trek, leaving him to care for the family. On one occasion the family was having difficulty finding enough food. They had gone without supper the night before, and when breakfast time came, they still could find nothing to eat. They held family prayer in their tent asking God for help, and when the prayer was done Samuel took his gun and prepared to leave in search of meat for the family. As he opened the tent flap to leave, a large rabbit ran right into the tent. Samuel carefully aimed and shot the rabbit, much to the joy of the family.

In the midst of their rejoicing, a shadow fell across the floor. Looking up, they saw an Indian standing in the doorway. With what little English he knew and many gestures, he told them how he had chased the rabbit into their tent, and that it was rightfully his. The mother recognized the justice of the action, and relin-



*Overland Journeys. Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.*



quished the rabbit. But as the Indian turned to go, the children, seeing their breakfast disappear, began to cry. The Indian stopped, turned and said: "Where your man?" She told him that her husband was dead. He grunted, handed her the rabbit, turned and walked away."

*From Heart Throbs of the West.*

**John Stucki** WAS ONLY 9 years old when his family came to Utah with the last handcart company in 1860. He and his sister, Mary Ann, 6, walked almost all the way; two younger siblings rode in the cart. Mary Ann later told this story about the crossing:

"Our provisions began to get low. One day a herd of buffalo ran past and the men of our company shot two of them. Such a feast we had when they were dressed! Each family was given a piece of meat to take along. My brother John, who pushed at the back of our cart, used to tell how hungry he was all the time and how tired he got from pushing. He said he felt that if he could just sit down for a few minutes he would feel so much better. But instead, Father would ask if he couldn't push a little harder. Mother was nursing the baby and could not help much, especially when the food ran short and she grew weak. When rations were reduced, Father gave Mother a part of his share of the food, so he was not so strong either.

"When we got that chunk of buffalo meat, Father put it in the handcart. John remembered that it was the fore part of the week, and that Father said we would save it for Sunday dinner. John said, 'I was so very hungry and the meat smelled so good to me while pushing at the handcart that I could not resist. I had a little pocket knife, and with it I cut off a piece or two each half day.

Although I expected a severe whipping when father found it out, I cut off little pieces each day. I would chew them so long that they got white and perfectly tasteless. When father came to get the meat he asked me if I had been cutting off some of it. I said "Yes, I was so hungry I could not let it alone." Instead of giving me a scolding or whipping, father turned away and wiped tears from his eyes.'" *From Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860.* ▼

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## *On the Trail*





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